

GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
SAN JUAN

ADDRESS ALL OFFICIAL
COMMUNICATIONS TO THE
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
SAN JUAN, P. R.

July 21, 1943

Circular Letter No. 22

To : All Supervisory Officials and
Teachers of Physical Education

Re : PROGRAM OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION
FOR 1943-44

Ladies and Gentlemen:

INTRODUCTION

The principles and the program herein outlined should in no way hinder or limit the efforts of school authorities who wish to provide a more elaborate program.

In the development of a program of physical education in the elementary, junior, and senior high schools we wish to emphasize the fact that no school in Puerto Rico has the right to allow a few boys and girls to be picked and trained to make a show, while the great majority of children are neglected.

We must break away from the old idea of the past years that only those boys and girls endowed with strength, agility, and aggressiveness are the ones for us to train and encourage in athletics. This is unjust, unfair, and undemocratic.

PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING A PROGRAM OF
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Although the children must be protected from excessive and inappropriate physical activities, they should take part in a well-planned athletic program, since physical education makes specific contributions to health. To obtain the best results, it is necessary that the health and physical education programs be closely related.

Present day physical education programs must give:

1. Attention to the recreational interests and skills of the child.

2. Attention to those social values which result from the child's experiences in play with others, in the give and take with companions, in the choice of and respect for leaders, and in obedience to the rules of the game.

To achieve the two objectives stated above, the physical education program for boys and girls must include:

1. A regular class program.
2. A program of intramural athletics.
3. Field days.

Intramural sports and athletics make up an extremely important part of physical education, since it is this part of the program which gives all pupils an opportunity to put into use the skills acquired in the school. It is a program for all pupils, regardless of their size and proficiency.

A well-balanced program of physical education first should provide for a varied program of intramural sports, and, only after this is arranged, should the interscholastic program be set up in the junior and senior high schools. The large group must be provided for in preference to the select few.

METHOD OF TEACHING

When we speak of methods of teaching we mean procedures that have been used many times and represent familiar techniques which have been improved by practice and experience.

A teacher should feel free to adapt any method to his needs and not consider any statement of method as a permanent guide.

The technique for presenting a play activity indicates a method. Varying approaches will be needed for different groups. A good teacher will make his own adaptations and developments to specific situations.

The teacher must be thoroughly familiar with the activities to be taught, the psychology of general and motor learning, the physiology of exercise, and the methods of teaching the activities.

CLASSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

It is difficult to find a classification for the many activities making up the program content of physical education in the elementary, junior, and senior high schools.

A. Elementary Schools:

The program in the elementary school should include games of simple organization, singing games, folk dancing, rhythms, story plays, and mimetics. The fundamentals of volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball, and track and field should also be taught.

B. Junior High Schools:

It is necessary to differentiate the physical education program for boys and girls on the junior high school level on the basis of sex difference. Their program should include: group games, team games, self-testing activities, individual sports, athletics, dances, and outing activities. Games and sports are a very important part of the program. Outings and hiking activities are often a direct outgrowth of the many activities and leadership in the field.

The program in the junior high school is required and class periods must be assigned just as is done with the other subjects of the curriculum.

C. Senior High Schools:

Physical education in the senior high school must be offered in daily class periods and in after-school activities. The intramural and interscholastic competition compose the after-school program. Virtually all intramural activities should be carried over from the daily class periods.

Due to the shortage of vital materials, high cost of transportation and hotel accommodation the five sectional Senior High School Athletic Leagues will be discontinued for the duration of the war. To offset this, intramural competition and field days should be intensified considerably.

Wherever credit is given in the senior high school for physical education I and II, the amount of time allotted to it must be equal to that allotted to any academic subject.

Sports or play days, where mass participation is emphasized, should be conducted in all the junior and senior high schools of the Island so as to bring together the pupils for socialized participation in games. The school play program should feature occasional special days, demonstrations, play days, festivals, and the like.

The following types of sports or play days could be put on:

1. The sports or play day may be intramural, involving only one or more junior or senior high schools in the district.
2. The sports or play day may be invitational, including a few neighboring junior or senior high schools.

Junior High Schools should not compete against the Senior High Schools.

KINDS OF ACTIVITIES

The following activities are suggested to assist the teacher in making his wise selection to build up his program. They should be planned to appeal to the interests of different children.

1. Games of Simple Organization

The game is the freest form of classwork in physical education. It permits the child to partake more according to his own judgement and ability than is possible in other forms of physical education activity.

The teacher can do a great deal by selecting the right game and by seeing that all children are included in the game.

In these types of games the children are organized in line, column, and circle formations for competition. Such games as Single Relay Race, Wheelbarrow Relay, Potato Relay; etc. could be played without the use of expensive equipment.

2. Baseball

The teaching of baseball fundamentals to the children is the very first thing a teacher should do before letting them actually play the game. The following fundamentals should be taught as preliminary preparation and training: Throwing, catching, batting, team play, and rules of the game.

3. Basketball

Due to the fact that authorities are continually introducing innovations in play, the game itself is in constant process of evolution. It is the duty of the teacher to review the latest official basketball guide, published by A. S. Barnes and Company, New York. In doing so, he will keep himself in the front rank and he will be in a better position to determine the correct method form of the game.

The following fundamentals should be taught for preliminary preparation and training: Ball handling, shooting, footwork, individual and team defense, and individual and team offense.

4. Volleyball

Children in the schools should familiarize themselves with this game. They should become better acquainted with the technical points, which tend to make the game more interesting and the competition keener.

The latest official volleyball guide, published by A. S. Barnes and Company, New York, should be consulted at all times for revisions of rules.

The following fundamentals of volleyball should be taught before actually playing the game: Handling the ball, serving, defense and offense, and team play.

5. Softball

The teaching of fundamentals is very important. This should be done before actually playing the game. The following fundamentals should be taught: Pitching; how to play first, second and third bases; the shortstop, outfielders, and shortfield positions.

6. Track and Field

The teacher should not be concerned in developing **individual** experts in any event. The primary concern should be to teach the children those track and field events that may be performed with the greatest enjoyment by all. This means that each event should be presented as simply as possible; that the fundamental principles of running, throwing, and jumping should be taught, not from the standpoint of track and field events alone, but from the point of view of their use in all sports and activities of life; and that the children should be encouraged to develop their own techniques on the basis of these principles.

The boys and girls can derive a great deal of pleasure and benefit from many track and field events, and it is well for them to learn something of the skills involved in the following activities:

Dashes -- 50, 60, 75, 100, and 200 meters.
Teach the proper start, the stride and finish.

Hurdles -- 50, 60, 65, and 110 meters.

Relays -- 4 x 25 meters; 4 x 50 meters;
4 x 100 meters; 8 x 100 meters; 4 x 400 meters.

Jumps -- Running broad, running high, hop-step-and jump, and the pole vault.

Throws -- Discus, javelin, baseball, and shot put.

CALENDAR OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

The following program of physical education activities has been included in this year's work for all schools. The purpose of this calendar is to coordinate physical education throughout the school system.

As may be seen on the following chart, volleyball, basketball, and baseball will be played for four months; track and field activities for three months; other recreational activities listed will be carried on throughout the whole year. Shaded sections represent the approved season for each sport.

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chart

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The first two months of each volleyball, basketball, baseball, and track season will be devoted to conditioning and training; the remainder to competition. It is impossible to avoid overlapping, if these seasons are to be long enough to be of benefit to the participants.

These seasons have been designated in coordination with other amateur athletic organizations on the Island. Thus, all amateur athletes, both in and out of school, will be carrying on the same activities at a time.

We urge and recommend the cooperation of the teachers of physical education with all local, insular, and federal athletic organizations, provided that this cooperation will not interfere with the work of the teachers in the physical education program in school. Under no circumstances should teachers of physical education absent themselves from their duties for the purpose of assisting at or working in connection with any outside activity. The only authorization for such action should be permission granted by the Commissioner of Education himself.

Every teacher of physical education will prepare a program on a monthly basis and follow it as closely as possible. These programs should be submitted to the Commissioner of Education in advance, not after being carried out.

School officials should proceed in accordance with the suggestions herein given.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) JOSE M. GALLARDO
Commissioner of Education